Electronic waste

445. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased state:

(a) whether Government are aware that electronic waste generated by a host of electronic gadgets are causing environmental degradation;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government;

(c) whether any proposal with Government to initiate any separate legislation to handle this problem; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (d) The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has formulated 'Draft Guidelines for Environmentally Sound Management of E-Waste[1] for the State Pollution Control Boards and Pollution Control Committees of the Union Territories and the industries with a view to provide guidance for handling e-waste in an environmentally sound manner. These draft Guidelines are available on CPCB's website www.cpcb.nic.in. A Task Force has been constituted by the Ministry of Environment and Forests for finalization of these Guidelines.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests have notified the Hazardous Waste (Management and Handling) Rules 1989 as amended in 2000 and 2003 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 which includes e-waste. These Rules regulate collection, storage, treatment, disposal and import of hazardous wastes including E-waste. The residues and wastes generated from the operations in electronic industry are considered as hazardous wastes and are listed at SI. No. 31 of Schedule 1 of these rules. Further, the export and import of E-waste is regulated under Schedule 3 of these rules, as Electrical, and Electronics Assemblies are covered in Categories A 1180 and B 1110. The import of wastes under this category is only permitted for direct reuse and not for recycling or final disposal. There is no proposal to initiate separate legislation for electronic waste.

Dredging Ram Setu

446. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that dredging Ram Setu is against the interest of environment;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the stand of Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) Any man-made activity or construction causes an impact on the surrounding environment. The impact on the environment likely to be made by the activity and the measures that need to be taken to mitigate the impact are assessed through scientific and well established procedures through an Expert Committee of the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF). The process of assessing environmental impact of the Sethusamudram project commenced on 11.1.1999, when the Ministry of Surface Transport (MoST) forwarded a copy of the initial Environment Evaluation Study on the Sethusamudram Project to the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) for views/comments/suggestions. This was examined in MoEF on 8th October, 1999 and it was suggested that a Scoping Paper